

THE Christian Messenger.

NO. 8.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1819.

VOL. I.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you—JOHN xxiii. 34.

(Continued from last Number.)

The epilepsy, called by the ancients the sacred disease, because it affected the mind of man, "comes by fits, which often attack persons seemingly in health; the person loses suddenly all sense and power of motion, so that if standing, he is thrown on the ground and agitated with violent convulsions, the muscles of the eyes and face are affected, and the tongue thrust out, a frothy mucus issues from the mouth," &c. See *Buchan's Domestic Medicine*.

It was the custom of the Jews to prefix the word spirit to many operations of the mind, the spirit of fear, &c. &c. We have now quoted a number of texts, in none of which do we find any devil comporting with the prejudice of the multitude.—If the devil was an angel of light, how could pride enter his heart in heaven? if it could, pride may enter the mansions of the blessed again, and instead of rest to our souls, we may feel the glow of combat and the battle's confusion, and unlike human war we cannot die; we can only fight where nothing can be gained, nothing lost! Again, if God would not permit Satan to stay in heaven, would he place him in a situation, where he could exercise his hate on man? would he expect a human being to resist the wiles of one, who had seduced angels from allegiance? We, therefore, boldly assert, that the Revelation of God does not hold out such sentiments. There is to be sure a quotation, "Lucifer, son of the morning, how art thou fallen?" &c. Isaiah xiv. (We beg the reader to peruse the whole chapter.) This is very far from sanctioning the opinion of the devil. Abiur views in this chapter one of the strong holds of the truth of Revelation. It was a prophecy about the destruction of Babylon, delivered previous to B. C. 696, which was accomplished B. C. 538. In corrobora-

tion of this, examine Is. xxi. 2. "Go up, Elam," &c. also Jer. l. and li. Isai. xlv. Jer. xxix. 10. The xiv. Is. contains a flight of fancy, a boldness of imagery peculiar to the prophecy of the evangelical penman, which no poetry can excel. The spirits of the mighty dead are represented as rising from the apartments of Sheol, to welcome the king of Babylon, saying, "Is this the man (not devil) that made the earth to tremble?" The whole is awfully sublime. The scripture abounds in figure, and should thus be read. And when we find the prophets in the Old, or Jesus speaking "in parables" in the New Testament, we ought to attend to it. There is a book said to have been brought page by page from heaven, which gives some account of the devil: as some of our readers may never have seen it, we will quote the passage. "And all the angels worshipped Adam together, except Ebles, who refused to be with those who worshipped him. And God said unto him, O Ebles, what hindered thee from being with those who worshipped Adam? He answered, it is not fit that I should worship man whom thou hast created of dried clay, of black mud, wrought into shape. God said, Get thee therefore hence, for thou shalt be driven away with stones, and a curse shall be on thee till the day of judgment. The devil said, O Lord, give me respite till the day of resurrection: God answered, verily, thou shalt be one of those, who are respited until the day of the appointed time: The devil replied, O Lord, because thou hast seduced me, I will surely tempt them to disobedience in the earth. God said, verily, as to my servants thou shalt have no power over them, but over those only who shall be seduced and who shall follow thee, and hell is surely denounced to them all."

Do you like this Koran account of the devil? But how came so many christians to believe the Koran account, which few of them have read? We answer that the justly celebrated "Paradise Lost," has disseminated the credence. Franklin could imitate a chapter of scripture, but it was Milton who could give an article of belief to Christendom from a poem:

"His form had not yet lost
All her original brightness; nor appeared
Less than archangel ruin'd, and the excess
Of glory obscur'd; —
"Millions of spirits, for his faults amerc'd
Of heaven, and from eternal splendour flung,
For his revolt."

Thus passim Milton speaks. But though he has given Satan a character subdued, not humbled, nobly struggling with Omnipotence, a being who commands our admiration, and our pity, a mark for heroes to copy from; it is unheeded by the religious reader, who charges the supposed devil with the most abject meanness, and calls him up to terrify the infant mind ere reason dawns, producing effects which perhaps may never be conquered in life. The Hungarian miner in imagination sees the devil, in the shape of a negro boy, extinguish his lights, and falls horror struck—and men who have ceased to believe in the horned and cloven-footed Satan, feel the prejudice of infancy, in the still hour of midnight. But do we not see the word in the Bible? Yes, we read "The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil!" 1 Jno. iii. 8. Men are not his works, they are the workmanship of God, but the evil deeds of men shall be destroyed totally. We read Heb. ii. 14. of the destruction of the devil. Now what is this devil spoken of? The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath,

strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. Here is a black catalogue of the works of the devil: viz. of the flesh. How are these produced? "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." And, "every man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed." Now if the flesh produces all this, where is there any evil production from another cause?

The scripture speaks of the destruction of these works and the destruction of the cause. How then shall men when freed from these be sinners, and how tormented when this devil is destroyed?

Reader, examine for yourself, think, reflect on this subject, it is not in unison with the theories of the day, but remember how many things once held true, are now disbelieved. Abiur has dared to think, he trusted not in the divinity of the pulpit, his choice was to "search the scriptures," and though his creed is different from that of any church, he believes it to be that of the Bible.

ABIUR.

As the name *Alehim* is relative, expressive of governing, promising, threatening, protecting, and judging; and is never used in the scripture in any other sense, so the name *Jehovah* is also relative, expressive of causing to be, or fulfilling the promises or threatenings, directing or controlling the agents or instruments in the accomplishing of what had been promised or threatened. So the title *Alehim*, God, could no more exist without a people to whom the Supreme Being sustained the relation of Governor and Judge, than the title *Governor* could exist without a people under the rule or management of such governor. And the title *Jehovah* could not subsist without the fulfilment of promises or threatenings, and consequently of people to whom these things related.

The term, *Jehovah*, is commonly translated *Lord*. The term, *Adon*, is also translated *Lord*; but is chiefly, if not always in the possessive case *Adoni*, *Adonik*, *my Lord*, *thy Lord*. The Supreme Being said to Moses, Exod. vi. 3. "I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by the name of *God Almighty*, but by my name *Jehovah*, was I not known to them."

The patriarchs knew him by the

name *Jehovah* in other respects, they builded altars to *Jehovah*, and called upon the name of *Jehovah*. But in relation to the promise of Canaan to their seed, it was impossible he should be known by his name *Jehovah*, until the time when he came to fulfil the promise; then he would be known in that character, the fulfiller of the promise. In most, if not all instances, where we find the word *Lord*, with the article, i. e. *the Lord*, in our English Bibles, they will be found translations of the name *Jehovah*; and in other instances, where the article would be improper in English, as in Psalm xc. 1. and in Psalm viii. 1. 9. but the second word *Lord* in these two verses, expressing personal relation, is a translation of *Adoninu*.

Any one who will look into the prophets may easily perceive, that they invariably apply the title, *the Lord*, or *Jehovah*, to the accomplishment of promises or threatenings.

Although the term, *Alehim*, has a plural termination, like the English term *sheep*, and neither necessarily imply a plurality; yet both are properly used when applied to more than one. I am not aware of any proper objection to its plural signification, Gen. i. 26. and chap. iii. 22. and that the plural pronoun *US* is expressive of *the Father*, and *the Son*, as the *US* in John xvii. 21. That our Lord existed with the Father, and possessed glory with him before the world was, John xvii. 5. seems so exceedingly plain from his own testimony there and elsewhere, that I may safely say, I do not know how a simple sincere christian can satisfy himself with denying the truth of it. Many things both in the Old and in the New Testament would seem to me extremely difficult, if not unintelligible, without admitting the truth of our Lord's testimony; which, admitting its truth, appear intelligible.

But as I admit the *Alehim* of the Old Testament to be applicable to the Son of God, so I admit the title *Jehovah* also, to be applicable to him. "Let us go down." Gen. xi. 7. I suppose to refer to *the Father* and *the Son*. Isai. vi. 5. Mine eyes have seen the king, *Jehovah of Hosts*, compared with John xii. 41. These things said *Esaias* when he saw his glory, and spake of him, seem to be a pretty plain testi-

mony on that subject. I know not how else to understand the words of the Evangelist. It would seem from the New Testament that our Lord is appointed the Universal Ruler and Judge, and that he will fulfil both the promises and threatenings of God, so that the leading characteristics both of *Alehim* and *Jehovah* are conferred on him by his God and Father, and he will surely accomplish the objects of both titles, and completely effect the purposes of the Father. T.

NO. VI. (Continued from last Number.)

Much more might be written on this subject; but as no evidence has been offered in favour of the proposition to which the one I have endeavoured to establish is opposed, and as what is here offered seems to be conclusive, nothing further is necessary at present. I would, however, just observe, that if professed christians would learn to adopt the phraseology of scripture more than they do, and of course copy the very words of Jesus and his apostles, in speaking of God, of Christ, of faith, of salvation, or of our duty in any of these respects, they would soon become not only more united in sentiment, in consequence of habituating themselves to the use of the same language, i. e. when conversing on the same subject, but also more united in feeling and brotherly love; which are some, at least, of the great objects of Christianity.

2. I am to show that none of the expressions of Christ, according to my hypothesis, are *presumptuous*. I should have been better satisfied if Mr. H. had named the expressions which he considers of this character. He has said that he "pretended at least to work stupendous miracles in his own name." This has already been denied; and the words of Christ quoted to show that it is incorrect. He frankly acknowledged that he did not come in his own name; but in the name of his Father. Now, if he did not come in his own name, then, in relation to his divine mission, nothing which he did was in his own name; but all was in the name of his Father who sent him. "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not." "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." John v. 43. x. 25. When he had

performed one of his "stupendous miracles," the multitude saw it, and "glorified God which had given such power unto men." Matt. ix. 8. It ought to be shown that it is impossible for God to give such power unto men, before any of the faithful servants of God are charged with being presumptuous for obeying the divine command; and much less he, who, as a son over his own house, through the eternal spirit, offered himself without spot to God. Heb. iii. 6. ix. 14.

Admitting Jesus to have been merely a good man, and not superior to the greatest of prophets, in what particular act shall we say he was presumptuous?

Is it presumptuous for a good man not to do his own will, but the will of God? not to seek his own glory, but the glory of God? Is it presumptuous for a good man to pray? and if there should be an occasion for it, to continue "all night in prayer to God?" Luke vi. 12. Having received power over all flesh, and a command so to do, would it be presumptuous in a good man, in obedience to that command, to raise the dead? or perform any other act which was done by Jesus? If so, why were not the apostles presumptuous, notwithstanding they were endued with power from on high, in attempting to perform any of the miracles which they did? Having received the power, which undoubtedly was the same in them as in their master, they do not hesitate to do the work; each doing the work in the name of him from whom they received their commission. So far from being presumptuous in so doing, they would have been disobedient not to have performed. And how the miracles of Jesus afford any more proof of his superhuman nature, than the miracles of Moses, the prophets, and the apostles, afford proof of theirs, I cannot even imagine.

3. I am to show that none of the expressions of Jesus are *indefensible*. And if there were time and room, it could undoubtedly be made evident, that the expressions of Jesus are altogether defensible, not only against the vile and false aspersions of infidels, but also against the unjust charges which are but too often brought against him, either directly, or indirectly, by his professed friends.

Whatever is true is certainly defen-

sible. In order to prove, therefore, that any of the expressions of Jesus are *indefensible*, it must be shown that some of his expressions are *not true*.

The reader will understand me. Mr. H. has assumed a position, and I meet him on his own ground. And the argument is now reduced to this alternative; either his hypothesis, or mine, or else the character of Jesus, must inevitably fall. For myself, I am prepared to give up my hypothesis, the moment I see it to be irreconcilable with scripture testimony: for it would be a great grief to me to have the character of Jesus suffer by my weakness.

Mr. H. has said, that in plain and unequivocal terms, "Jesus has claimed equality and identity with the eternal Jehovah." This, as it respects *identity*, is as plainly and unequivocally denied: and as it respects *equality*, it remains yet to be proved. But Mr. H. has not, nor will he ever bring sufficient evidence to prove this assertion. I will quote the passage which appears the most plausible of any. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Philip. ii. 6. This text certainly affords no proof of *identity*. The form of any thing is not the identity of the thing of which it is only the form: neither is equality the same as identity. One man may be equal to another, and yet they are not identically *one*, but *two*. The text, however, is differently rendered by different translators. Newcome translates it thus:—"did not esteem it a prey to be like God." Wakefield, thus;—"did not think of eagerly retaining this divine likeness." Improved Version, thus:—"did not esteem as a prey this resemblance to God." In all this we see nothing of *identity*; and instead of *equality*, we find only a *likeness* or *resemblance*; which is not inconsistent with my hypothesis. The express words of Jesus, *my Father is greater than I*, ought to be sufficient to do away this forced construction of the words of the apostle; I say forced, i. e. in this place; for certainly the original word does not necessary convey the idea of equality.

R. C.

(Concluded in our next Number.)

15. Was Jesus the self existent

God, and at the same time the creature man (consisting of human soul and body;) if so, are not there two distinct beings?

16. If he was God and man at the same time, did he speak sometimes as man and at other times as God? If so, why does not scripture inform us when he spoke in each character?

17. If Jesus was God, how could he be tempted, suffer, or obey? what pain can assail God, and to what superior should he bow?

18. Was the sin of man infinite, and did it require infinite satisfaction?

19. Did the infinite, i. e. the divine nature of Jesus die? If so, did not God die?

20. Infinite sin deserves infinite punishment: if so, must not the satisfier suffer infinitely, i. e. everlastingly?

21. Did the human nature of Christ only die? if so, was not the satisfaction for sin finite?

Quæstor, in his first number, proposed a number of queries; they were answered not to his satisfaction; he is no "caviller," no doubter of the omnipotence of his God; he has advanced no opinion, but merely asked questions.—If there are any capable and willing to answer them, to oppose or defend the answers, they are kindly desired. Quæstor advocates truth, and if he finds any idea of his opposed to it, he will not only abandon error, but return the offering of a grateful heart it to those who pointed it out.

QUÆSTOR.

—O—
FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

When I wrote the letter to Mr. Gardner as published in No. 5, I had no expectation of seeing it in print, as may be easily seen by my personal address to him. In the close of the letter which was not printed, I desired him if he knew R. C. he would let him see it, in hopes it would do him good. I would inform R. C. that I am too ignorant of the learned languages to be able to contend with him about the meaning of Hebrew words, therefore, am obliged to take the Bible as it stands in my own language, when it says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell with all the people that forget God." I am obliged to believe

it, because the Bible says so, and the apostle says, "all scripture is given by the inspiration of God," &c.

From A Subscriber, I expect no reply, my letter being unanswerable, because to him unintelligible. As R. C. is a clergyman I recommend him to take Matt. xxviii. and two last verses, with Dan. xii. 3. for his support. I should be obliged to Berea to inform us, what is meant in Matt. xxvi. 24. "It would be good for that man if he had never been born." Respecting the folly of grey hairs, I have often applied the words of an English poet, "Lord direct us, we are fools." If a subscriber would read Brown's History of Missions, he would find Greenlanders, Hottentots, Negroes, and Indians, capable of understanding what to him is unintelligible. The following extract from Bishop Taylor's Sermon, on John xvii. 17. I hope will not be unacceptable. "The good man that feels the power of the Father, and he to whom the Son is become wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; he, in whose heart the love of the spirit of God is spread, to whom God hath communicated the Holy Ghost the Comforter: this man, though he understands nothing of that which is unintelligible, yet he only understands the mysteriousness of the Holy Trinity. No man can be convinced well and wisely of the article of the holy, blessed, and undivided Trinity, but he that feels the mightiness of the Father "begetting him to a new life;" the wisdom of the Son "building him up in a most holy faith," and the love of the Holy Spirit of God, making him to become like unto God. J. J.

Extract from the Epistle of the Friends' Yearly Meeting, held in London, 1819.

"Let us ever bear in mind, that the salvation of the soul cannot be inherited by birth-right, nor imparted by education. It is an individual work, indispensably necessary for every man to know wrought in him through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour."

QUERY—Is it possible, in the nature of things, for any man to know any thing concerning himself which is not in fact true? And if true, wherein is the knowledge "indispensably necessary?" Is it necessary for the existence of the fact; or, is it necessary

only for the sake of enjoying the truth as it is in Jesus, which must be known before it can be enjoyed?

An answer to the above queries will very much gratify a FRIEND.

—O—
Ecclesiastical.

It appears by the "minutes of the proceedings of the Western Association of Universalists, in the state of New York, 1819," that the Rev. David Gilson is "no longer considered a member in the fellowship of that association." Also, that Doctor J. H. Ellis, for reasons therein stated, "cannot be admitted into that association—any of its branches, or any church or society in fellowship with that association as a member in fellowship, until such time as he makes satisfaction to the Northern Association, and is received again by them."

It may be proper to state, to prevent any misconstruction of the above article, that these brethren have not been excluded for any errors, or supposed errors of sentiment; for, on this subject, there does not appear to have been any complaint.

—O—
The following is a part of Calvin's comment upon 1 John v. 7

"The expression, 'these three are one,' does not relate to the essence but to the agreement of the persons spoken of. The meaning is, the Father, and his eternal Word, and Spirit harmoniously bear testimony to Christ. Some copies accordingly read, 'as' [i. e. agree in one thing.] But although you read 'are one' as it is in other copies, still there is no doubt that the Father, Word, and Spirit are said to be one in the same sense as the blood and water and spirit, in the verse immediately preceding."

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Two religious publications have been commenced during last year at Paris. The one is a Protestant work, entitled *Archives du Christianisme*, (Records of Christianity,) commenced in January 1818. The other is Catholic, called the Religious Chronicle, begun in June

From these Journals it appears that more attention is paid to religion in France than hitherto. Toleration is now established. Lancasterian schools are in operation, to which great encouragement is given. Take the following as a proof of the liberality now existing among intelligent Catholics there.

"Without instruction the poor cannot read the Bible—And by what right will any one pretend to deny to a whole class of Christians,

the reading of the Sacred Books, dictated by Him who is Truth itself? And the reading of works composed to explain their meaning, and to inculcate sentiments of piety and love to God? Is it not manifest impiety to intercept the light and the consolation, which he sends? And who are deprived of these benefits? The most unfortunate. They, who, disinherited of almost all the pleasures of this life, have the most need, that they may not believe Providence unjust, to think upon another life, when we shall all be weighed in the same balance"

"Among the common people, the idea of the Divinity is almost lost in a mass of gross superstitions. The observance of religious ceremonies is often considered as affording a dispensation from performing good actions, and a privilege to commit bad. Robbers stop you on the high way, wearing rosaries. A man assassinates his enemy without any remorse of conscience. A pilgrimage or a procession will wash away the crime tomorrow. The most shameful sloth nourishes the development of every vice. Conjugal fidelity loses respect; and there are those, who, under the shelter of a scapulary, give themselves up to the worst excesses of debauchery. If the primitive Christians, whose worship was so pure, could revisit such a country, what would they think?—The spirit of Christianity includes every virtue, and proscribes every vice. He is not a Christian, who is not a man of virtue."

—O—
A variety of remarks have been made complaining of a monopoly in this paper. We pledged ourselves, on assuming the management of the work, that every article should have insertion in the order in which it was received. The printer has marked the articles accordingly, and in that order have they appeared. Not one has been suppressed, except for abusive language or incoherent matter. On this last point we must exercise a little judgment. We wish to see ideas appear in a respectable dress. Let the tenets be of whatever sect, to us it matters not. We have in this country a perfect liberty of conscience—if we wish to employ it. All being invited, we wish all to participate. But let all animosity be banished. Where errors exist, let them be pointed out in a calm, dignified manner, that the writer may show that his wish is to produce conviction, and that conviction may produce good.

It is requested that in future all Greek quotations be put in Greek characters.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

It is an unpleasant task to notice inadmissible communications, but we are compelled to do it, to show our reasons for not inserting them. A piece, signed C, has been sent this week, which we feel sorry is precluded, from the personalities it contains. Most of it we would willingly insert, but suppose that the writer would not be pleased if we should take the liberty. If he will give this permission, it shall appear in its proper order.

—O—
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Where all Communications are to be addressed.